

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6286
INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMCONSUL BELFAST
AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

UNCLAS LONDON 11909

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, UK

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT MOVES TO INCREASE NI PARLIAMENTARY
REPRESENTATION

REF: LONDON 11789

1. SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE GEORGE THOMAS JULY 19 ANNOUNCED
THAT HE WOULD CONVENE A MEETING OF A SPEAKERS CONFERENCE
TO REVIEW NORTHERN IRELAND'S REPRESENTATION IN PARLIA-
MENT ON JULY 27. THE 28-MEMBER CONFERENCE -- WHOSE
DELIBERATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE ABOUT 6 MONTHS --
WILL "MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE NUMBER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY CONSTITUENCIES THAT THERE SHOULD BE IN NI". IT IS
EXPECTED TO RECOMMEND THAT NI'S REPRESENTATION BE IN-
CREASED FROM THE PRESENT 14 SEATS TO 18 OR 19 SEATS.

2. ALL PARTIES, EXCEPT THE SCOTTISH AND WELSH NATIONAL-
ISTS, WILL BE REPRESENTED IN THE CONFERENCE. JAMES MOLY-
NEAUX AND ENOCH POWELL HAVE BEEN NAMED TO REPRESENT THE
ULSTER UNIONISTS, AND GERRY FITT WILL REPRESENT THE
PREDOMINANTLY CATHOLIC SDLP. ONCE THE CONFERENCE HAS
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REPORTED, LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING THE NEW CONSTITUENCIES
WILL HAVE TO BE PASSED AND THE CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY
COMMISSION PROCEDURE COMPLETED BEFORE THE NEW SEATS
ARE ACTUALLY ALLOCATED. THE NEW MPS WILL NOT BE
ELECTED UNTIL THE FIRST GENERAL ELECTION FOLLOWING COM-
PLETION OF THE ENTIRE PROCEDURE.

3. COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT PLACED A HIGH PRIORITY ON
GETTING THE SPEAKERS CONFERENCE UNDERWAY, AS IT BELIEVES
THIS PROCESS WILL PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF AT LEAST
6 UNIONIST VOTES FROM BEING CAST AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT
ON CONFIDENCE ISSUES UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE IMPLEMENTING
LEGISLATION IS APPROVED. THAT IS LIKELY TO TAKE AT LEAST
A YEAR. BREWSTER

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Message Attributes

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